

Income tax note

CONSUMER NEWS has received inquiries concerning possible income tax deductions involved in various fees & taxes appearing on consumers' gas & electric bills [CONSUMER NEWS, Oct. 1, 1974].

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) advises that:

- A sales tax which appears on a utility bill & which is imposed under state or local law may be deducted if the rate is the same as the general sales tax.

- A late-payment charge which is assessed by a public utility is deductible as interest if no part of the charge is for a specific service performed in connection with the consumer's account.

- No deductions may be taken for energy taxes, environmental charges or "pass through" charges.

Safety of saccharin

Food & Drug Administration (FDA) is now examining details of a report on the safety of saccharin, prepared by National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council (NAS-NRC).

The report—which attempts to evaluate the scientific validity of all existing laboratory studies on saccharin—concludes that the available evidence is not definite or complete enough to allow a final decision on whether saccharin causes cancer when it is eaten by test animals.

According to NAS-NRC, although test animals in several studies did develop bladder tumors, tests did not conclusively prove that saccharin caused the tumors. Further, other studies in which animals did not develop tumors were not designed & carried out well enough to be definitive.

NAS-NRC's report recommends that other more effective studies be undertaken to resolve the question of carcinogenicity. FDA will determine what tests are needed.

In the meantime, saccharin will continue to be marketed under the limitations set by FDA, on NAS-NRC's recommendation, in Feb. 1972 when saccharin was removed from the list of substances generally recognized as safe (GRAS list). [CONSUMER NEWS: Dec. 1, 1974]. Under these limitations, the only legal uses of saccharin are (1) in diet foods clearly labeled as such, (2) for certain technological uses, (3) in combination with sugar only in diet beverages.

For the complete NAS-NRC report evaluating saccharin studies, send order to National Technical Information Service, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 2215. Send \$4.75 for a printed report, \$2.25 for microfiche.

consumer news

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
Office of Consumer Affairs
Virginia H. Knauer, Director

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Transportation for the handicapped

Although it is difficult to determine exactly how many handicapped persons there are in the United States—and even to define what "handicapped" means—the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) estimates there are over 13 million handicapped Americans who have trouble getting on & off planes, buses, trains, subways & cars.

This figure includes persons with impaired vision & hearing as well as those who can get around only with special aids such as wheelchairs, seeing eye dogs (now called "leaders"), walkers & canes. The 13 million figure also includes those who are so handicapped they probably are unable to use existing public or private transportation.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, provides for the creation of the Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (A&TBCB) which seeks to simplify travel problems for handicapped persons. One objective is to provide usable transportation for the handicapped within existing transportation systems—rather than developing separate accommodations.

Here is what some Federal agencies, state & local governments & transportation systems are doing to ease travel for the handicapped:

- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which is in charge of safety aspects of air travel, held hearings during September, October & November 1973, to clarify how regulations assuring air travel for the handicapped could be made consistent with principles of safety for everyone on board [CONSUMER REGISTER: Sept. 15, 1973]. The agency was particularly concerned with emergency situations where fast evacuations from planes might be hampered by the presence of handicapped passengers.

In July 1974, FAA proposed regulations designed to insure that the physically handicapped would be able to travel by air [CONSUMER REGISTER: Sept. 1, 1974]. The proposals were partly in response to charges by persons who said that certain airlines would not let them fly because they were handicapped. (At present, each airline has its own policy about transporting handicapped persons.) FAA is redrafting its proposed rules in light of comments received & expects to make a decision this year.

- In August 1974, Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) proposed that, when FAA regulations become final, all certified airlines submit rates for transporting handicapped travelers, to conform with FAA's safety requirements. CAB's proposed rules would include fares for litter cases as well as for attendants if airlines require attendants to accompany handicapped.

- Many states have developed their own marker devices on cars to identify handicapped drivers—for example, putting the letters "DP" (disabled person) on the license plate. But at present there is no national uniform marker to identify a handicapped driver. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is now investigating various state

(Continued on page 4)

Do you know your signs & signals?

Have you noticed that changes are being made in the traffic signals & road signs in your community? These new signs & signals are being posted under a program spearheaded by **Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)** at **Transportation Dept.** The goal is to create uniform traffic control devices throughout the country.

Here are some of the new traffic signals & road signs, presented under FHWA headings. Test yourself on each group by matching every item with the correct "translation" in the accompanying list. For answers, see box on bottom of page 2.

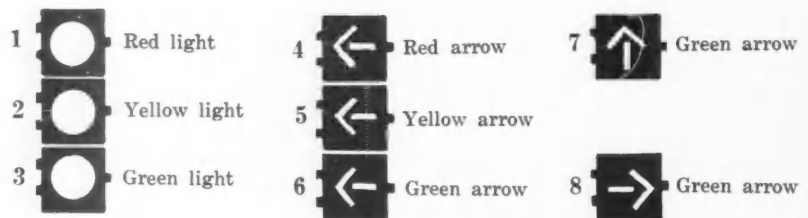
Some of these signs now appearing on highways do carry explanatory words. According to FHWA, the words will be removed before too long; drivers & pedestrians will be expected to understand the pictograms.

The new road signs are now appearing on state & Federally-aided highways; for all other roads, target date for signs is Dec. 31, 1976. Traffic signals are being phased in gradually.

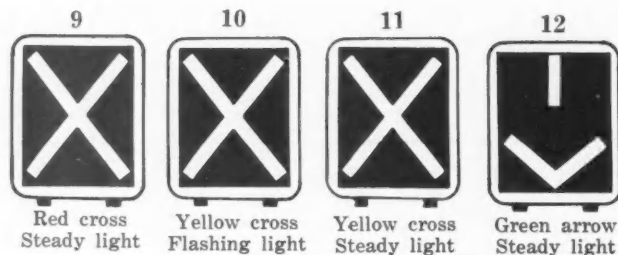
For a full-color folder showing these & other new signs, write to Office of Public Affairs, Federal Highway Administration, Washington, DC 20590. Ask for *New Look in Traffic Signs & Markings*; single copies are free.

- ☐ (a) Stop—turn left on green arrow
- ☐ (b) Turn left only
- ☐ (c) Do not enter intersection—signal about to change
- ☐ (d) Go ahead only
- ☐ (e) Do not turn—signal about to change
- ☐ (f) Stop
- ☐ (g) Turn right only
- ☐ (h) Go
- ☐ (i) Left turn permitted from this lane
- ☐ (j) Leave curb to cross street
- ☐ (k) Travel in lane
- ☐ (l) Do not use lane—traffic approaching
- ☐ (m) Do not leave curb—complete crossing if in middle of street
- ☐ (n) Do not leave curb
- ☐ (o) Clear this lane

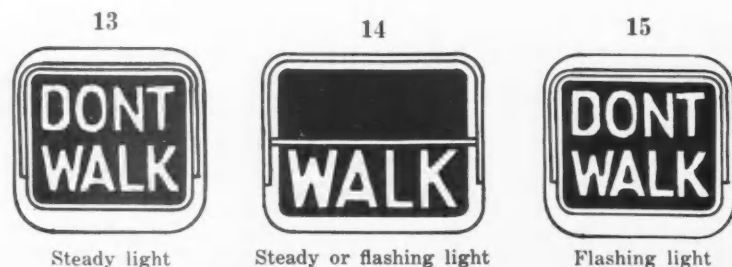
Traffic signals



Lane control signals



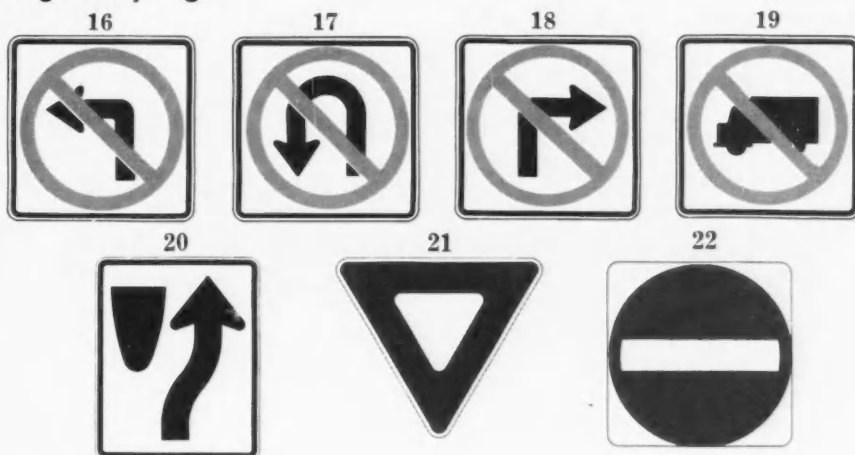
Pedestrian signals



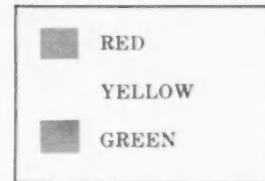
Answers

14	f	27	kk	40	ii
13	n	26	ee	39	pb
12	k	25	z	38	nm
11	i	24	jj		
10	o	23	dd	37	y
9	l	22	t	36	ll
8	g	21	q	35	hh
7	d	20	s	34	cc
6	b	19	p	33	x
5	e	18	r	32	ss
4	a	17	v	31	aa
3	h	16	u	30	ff
2	c	15	m	29	w
1	f			28	mm

Regulatory signs



- ☐ (p) No trucks
- ☐ (q) Yield
- ☐ (r) No right turn
- ☐ (s) Keep right
- ☐ (t) Do not enter
- ☐ (u) No left turn
- ☐ (v) No U turn



Warning signs



Guide signs



- ☐ (w) School
- ☐ (x) Hill
- ☐ (y) Bicycle crossing
- ☐ (z) Divided highway ends
- ☐ (aa) Pedestrian crossing
- ☐ (bb) Turn right for hiking trail
- ☐ (cc) Cattle crossing
- ☐ (dd) Two-way traffic
- ☐ (ee) Low clearance
- ☐ (ff) School crossing
- ☐ (gg) Slippery when wet
- ☐ (hh) Tractor crossing
- ☐ (ii) Turn right for bicycle route
- ☐ (jj) Divided highway
- ☐ (kk) Merge
- ☐ (ll) Deer crossing
- ☐ (mm) Traffic signal ahead
- ☐ (nn) No bicycles

Consumer complaints

Civil Aeronautics Board's Office of the Consumer Advocate handled 15,719 complaints from air travelers & shippers during 1974. This was an increase of almost 1,000 over the preceding year.

Chief causes of complaints were flight irregularities, reservations, fares & refunds. After two successive months of declines in the number of complaints received, there were 1,059 complaints filed in December 1974. This was an increase of 276 complaints over December 1973.

Recall

• **ASPIRIN & SEDATIVES—Food & Drug Administration (FDA)** announces recall of Medic Brand Aspirin Tablets labeled in part, "... Medic Aspirin Analgesic U.S.P. ... packed by International Drug Inc, Smyrna, TN ..." (lot number 40895) & Carroll Brand "Nods" Hard Gelatin Capsules (Methapyrilene-Scopolamine) packed 36 capsules per bottle labeled in part, "... Nods ... Non-narcotic ... An Aid for the Relief of Sleeplessness ... 36 Capsules ... Distributed by Carroll Chemical Co, Smyrna, TN," (lot number 410009). Recalled by companies. Distribution was to retail pharmacies & super market chains in eastern two-thirds of U.S. These products were cross-contaminated with menthyl testosterone, a male hormone which, in sufficient quantities, could create development of secondary sex characteristics.

Handicapped *(Continued from page 1)*

markers & is working with private organizations to learn what type of marker would be quickly recognized by most drivers.

- **Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)** is testing conventional & advance design train passenger equipment.

- **NHTSA** is supporting research projects in the areas of driver improvement & licensing for handicapped.

- **National Mass Transportation Assistance Act of 1974** is requiring lower rates on projects funded by **Transportation Dept.**, for the elderly & handicapped during non-peak hours.

- **Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964**, as amended, is requiring that special efforts be made in the planning & design of mass transportation facilities to insure their use by the elderly & handicapped.

- **Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA)** is supporting a Transbus program in selected cities throughout the country. Transbus is built with a low floor & only 1 step inside the bus; it has ramps, lifts & wheelchair tie-downs. Transbus is being tested on an experimental basis for normal city service as well as by handicapped users in these cities. After testing is completed late this year, UMTA will develop specifications for industry use.

Energy saving tip

Before you turn on your dishwasher, be sure it is full but not overloaded. A half-load wastes water. But a jam-packed load impedes proper water circulation, may leave soiled dishes. One way or the other, you're not getting your money's worth from the 14 or so gallons (54 liters) of hot water needed per load.

DST returns

Remember to turn clocks ahead 1 hour on Sunday, Feb. 23. The country has been on standard time since Oct. 27, 1974.

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